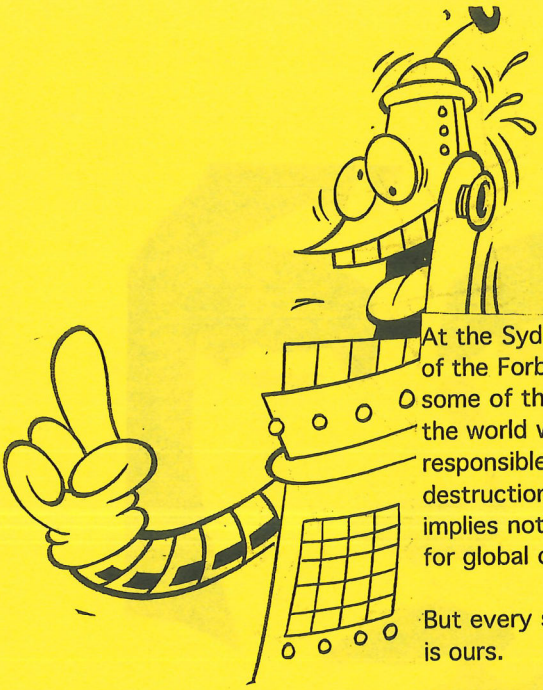
subplot:

a convergence of anarchistic ideas and actions

in the leadup to protests against the Forbes 500 Global CEO Conference

Friday 26th - Monday 29th August



At the Sydney Opera House from August 30th, as part of the Forbes Global CEO conference, the heads of some of the richest and most influential corporations in the world will gather. A mocking fuck you from those responsible for labour abuses, environmental destruction, war profiteering, etc, etc. a fuck you that implies nothing we do can resist the paths they plot for global capitalism.

But every storyline is made up of many subplots. This is ours.

Subplot aims to explore our affinities through a diversity of tactics of organised autonomous resistance, for the Forbes protests, ongoing resistance, so bring our creativity and inspiration. And your anger and frustration, we want to discuss all aspects of resistance and creating revolutionary change.

Things you may need to know:

Food: Food Not Bombs will do a delicious lunch on Sunday at Newtown Neighbourhood Centre, vegan food included. The Hare Krishna's do free food by Newtown Neighbourhood Centre on Monday evening from 6pm. Ask the locals at Sub Plot for their recommendations for cheap food eats.

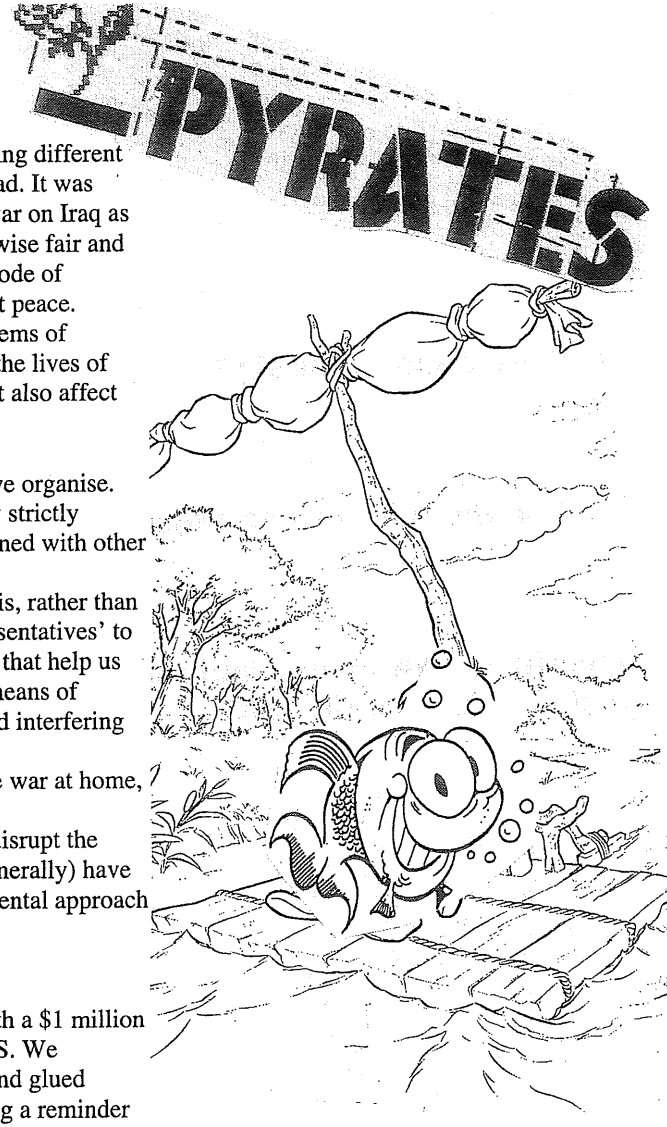
Billeting: call Nelson on 0412 328 231 to find a host family, There's heaps of free floor space (bed if you're lucky) around the hood between the start of the convergence and the end of Forbes protest.

General enquiries: Sunil: 0425 210 979
Beck: 0419 122 882

Check us out on: www.mutineers.blogspot.com
And if you want to email us after the convergence:
mutineers@graffiti.net

Legal Info ON MONDAY
All you need to know about the legislation that operates around Sydney Harbour and the Foreshore. Looking at the Sydney Opera House Trust Act 1961 and Sydney Harbour Foreshore Authority Act 1998.

mutineers setting sail



Mutiny is a group interested in exploring different ways to oppose war at home and abroad. It was formed by people who don't see the war on Iraq as an aberration in a system that is otherwise fair and good. We don't see it as a unique episode of violence in a world that is otherwise at peace. Instead we see it as part of global systems of capitalist exploitation that also affect the lives of people all over the world: systems that also affect our own lives.

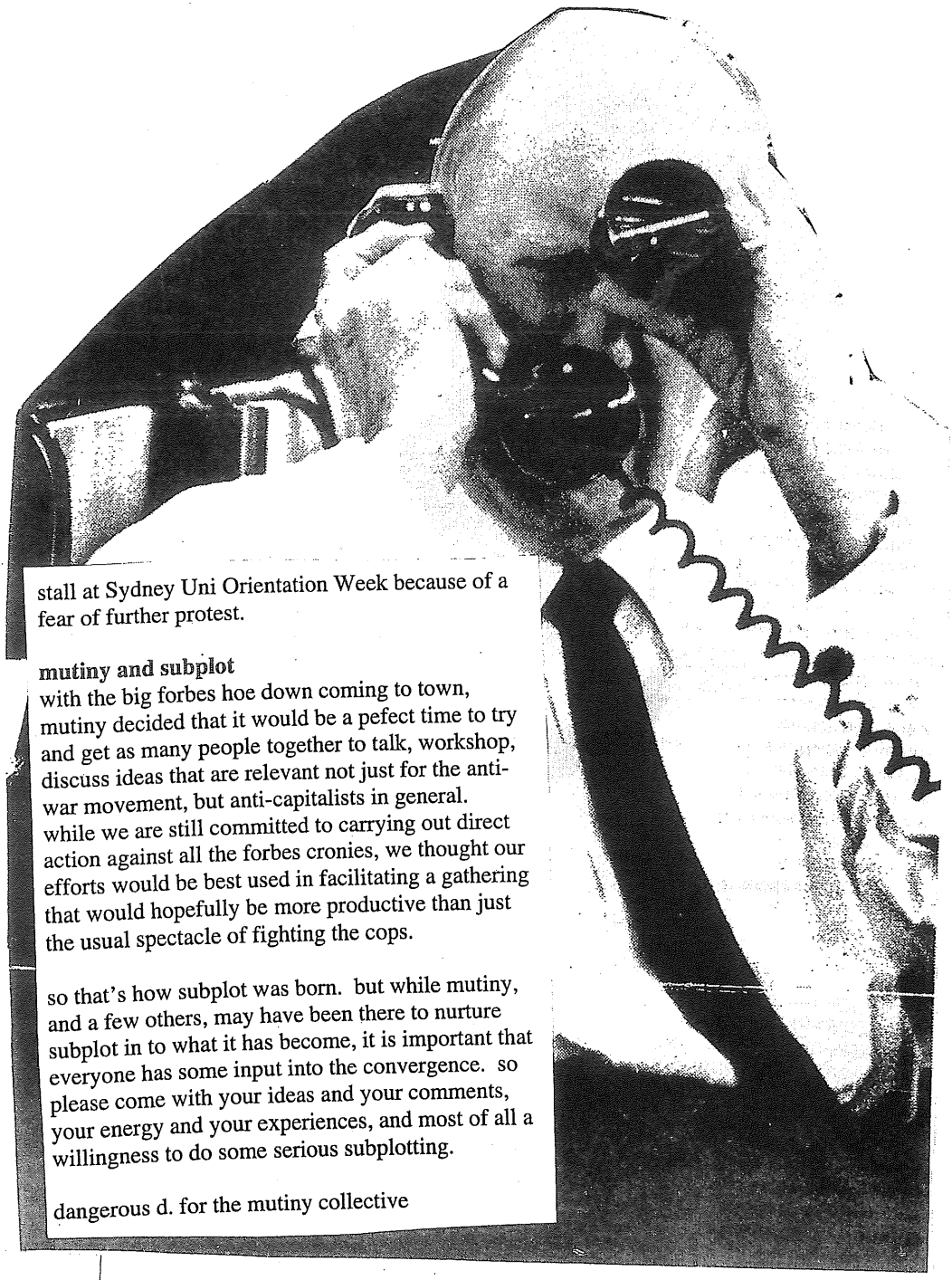
This understanding informs the way we organise. Members of the group don't share any strictly defined philosophy and we're not aligned with other groups. What we share is:
- a commitment to direct action. That is, rather than asking parliamentary (or other) 'representatives' to nicely help us, we want to find tactics that help us develop our collective strength, as a means of developing power in our own lives and interfering with the war machine.
- a desire to link the war on Iraq to the war at home, state racism and general repression.
- A desire to investigate, expose and disrupt the interests business (specifically and generally) have in this war. We try to take an experimental approach and learn from our mistakes.

Previous actions include

Worley – An Australian company with a $1 million contract to rebuild oil fields for the US. We 'invaded' their North Sydney office and glued plastic soldiers to the furniture, leaving a reminder of the military nature of their work.

KBR – A subsidiary of Halliburton, the single most significant corporation in the US war industry. First Mutiny organised a fake-blood splatterfest outside their office tower. Later 'Rich People 4 Global War' held a 'surprise party' to 'celebrate' Halliburton's contribution to the successful melding of military and corporate and interests.

ANZ – Has bought into the Iraqi Trade Bank, an alliance of foreign-based banks. After we targeted ANZ branches in the city, they cancelled a planned



stall at Sydney Uni Orientation Week because of a fear of further protest.

mutiny and subplot

with the big forbes hoe down coming to town, mutiny decided that it would be a pefect time to try and get as many people together to talk, workshop, discuss ideas that are relevant not just for the anti-war movement, but anti-capitalists in general. while we are still committed to carrying out direct action against all the forbes cronies, we thought our efforts would be best used in facilitating a gathering that would hopefully be more productive than just the usual spectacle of fighting the cops.

so that's how subplot was born. but while mutiny, and a few others, may have been there to nurture subplot in to what it has become, it is important that everyone has some input into the convergence. so please come with your ideas and your comments, your energy and your experiences, and most of all a willingness to do some serious subplotting.

dangerous d. for the mutiny collective

SATURDAY

@ Sydney Social Forum, West Petersham TAFE
West St, (near Lewisham station)

11:00 - 11:45 - Workshop on the Sydney anti-war group Mutiny.

12:00 - 3:30 - Connecting struggles - any group that wants to come along and give a short blurb about what they're doing followed by a discussion about how various political struggles can support and act in solidarity with each other.

15:00 - 16:30 - Forbes history and practical info-sharing/ with legal stuff + anyone else with info to pass on.

16:45 - 17:30 - Discussion about summit protests, tactics, organising and beyond.

SUNDAY

@ Newtown Neighbourhood Centre, King St, Newtown

10:15 - welcome to country

10:30 - opening session

11:30 - climate change
anarcha, feminism, autonomy and everyday liberation
halliburton, war profiteering and people power
universities and the defence industry

12:30 - anti-racism
defending unionism
abolishing private property

13:30 - lunch

14:30 - utopias: practical and ridiculous
media activism
autonomous marxism

15:30 - work: intensification and refusal
ray jackson
how the right think
lost in space: reclaiming places and power

16:45 - closing session - all-in discussion of ideas and workshops

18:00 - **close of day**

19:00 - **spokescouncil** at **STUCCO** to talk about Forbes protest.

MONDAY

@ Newtown Neighbourhood Centre

10:15 - **all-in about practical workshop day**

11:00 - guerilla gardening
creating a new online radical publication
queeruption
movement action plan

12:00 - fear and loathing in a security state
guerrilla art
experiences of work
drumming

1:00 - **lunch**

2:00 - legal, other info-sharing, tactics, direct action, skill-sharing all-in session

CLIMATE CHANGE

It's About Power. Climate change is the most pressing environmental and social issue of our time, and the movement for climate justice is growing steadily here and all over the world. Come and learn a bit about what climate change actually is, its consequences, and what we can do to stop the worst case scenario. Be involved in strategy planning for the three parts of the Australian Student Environment Network's Campaign - clean energy on campus, no new coal, and no nuclear.
With activists from ASEN and Rising Tide. see www.asen.org.au, and www.risingtide.org.au

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anarch feminism, autonomy and everyday liberation

"Power to the sisters and therefore to the class" - Selma James
AWOL is for all women who will no longer put up with being "put in our place", be it at work, at home, by the media, in the bedroom, or indeed within "the movement" itself. AWOL is a handful of women who have begun to set up a collective over the past year. In this workshop we would like to explore some of the ideas that we share in common, namely a desire to uncover our autonomy and exercise our hidden agency, in every sphere of our lives.

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HALLIBURTON, WAR PROFITERRING & PEOPLE POWER

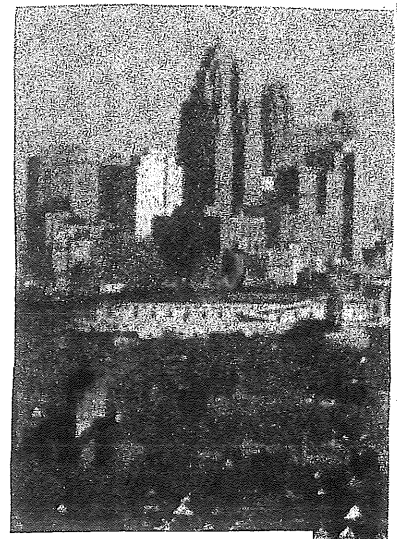
Workshop will discuss war profiteering as a pillar of Bush's war in Iraq, a grassroots direct action popular education campaign in Houston Texas against Halliburton, about our "people powered" strategy to get them out of Iraq.

Anti-Racism: An Open Discussion

Drew Fraser's 'IQ of 70' neo-nazism, increasing anti-terrorism laws profiling non-whites, the shooting of an innocent because they 'were wearing a coat on a hot summer day'. I've heard mixed opinions on all these controversial issues but there always seems to be a wall that prevents praxis from occurring. One of the many questions is: how do we convert the vast writings on racism and anti-racism into political activism? A show-and-tell discussion – anything goes.

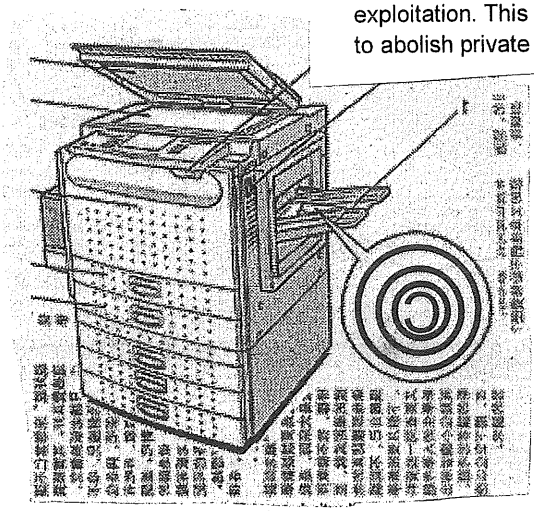
DEFENDING UNIONISM

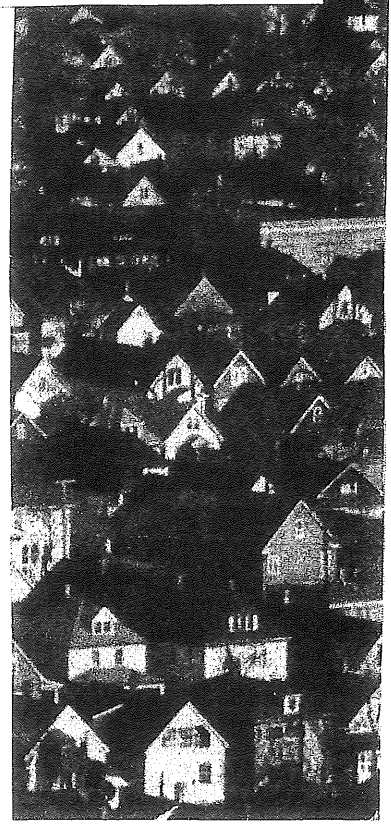
The Liberal Government's attacks on Student and Trade Unions are fast closing off spaces in which we organise critical political activity, intensifying the rule of Capital. They are also however, being met with the biggest mass campaign since the invasion of Iraq, forging new alliances and opening up new possibilities for resistance. This workshop provides a chance to share experiences about participation in the campaigns in defence of our unions, analyse the pressures we are facing and explore how we can work to radicalise these movements, deepen their political critique and push for effective militant action. One focus will be on how, through these mobilisations, we can strengthen resistance to the oppressive social relations we face – and challenge – every day.



ABOLISHING PRIVATE PROPERTY

The private ownership of property has long been recognised by anarchists as a significant source of domination and exploitation. This workshop will discuss ideas and strategies to abolish private property in the present.



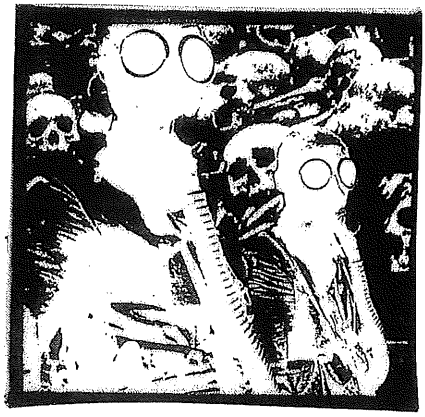


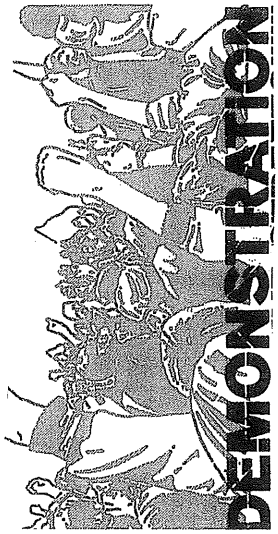
MEDIA ACTIVISM

Media Activism and Social Movements Net based media activism emerged as a form in it's own right with the explosion of the anti-capitalist movements as an attempt to politicise the social relations of communication both within the movement and against the dominant media. But just how successful has it actually been? Is media activism just for socially inept geeks and the uber chic or is it much more? How effective is it being at really communicating? Indymedia activists will facilitate an open discussion.

WORK: INTENSIFICATION & REFUSAL

Current IR legislation has thrown the spot light of social debate on to the nature and conditions of wage-labour. Union apparatuses and the Left have responded to the current attacks with a wholesale defence of current conditions, their own positions and of work generally. The challenge for revolutionaries is how to respond to these changes *that will intensify the nature and conditions of work* as part of an approach that seeks the absolute overturning of capitalist society. To do so we should start to challenge the out-dated thinking about how we work and how we can struggle and move towards a praxis built on our existing disobediences, new forms of co-ordinating our rebellions and attempts to confront the smooth functioning of the State.



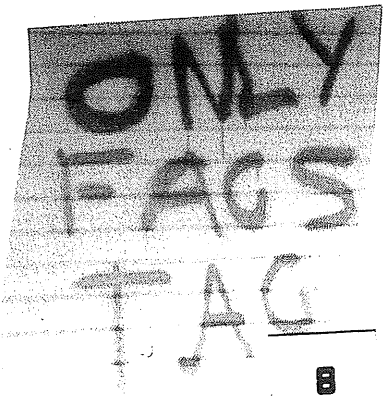


Lost in Space: Reclaiming Places and Power

What is social space? And what is its connection to power? The society we live in produces space which is authoritarian, oppressive and anti-life: the space of terror. However the qualities of social space also offer paths to liberation. How can we use this potential? As revolutionaries we frequently contest, disrupt and re-use the spatial routines of capitalist society. But what about making our own spaces? Why are there so few activist places, and why are they often either boring 'offices' or dysfunctional ghettoes? In this workshop I'll attempt to answer some of these questions and to suggest possible solutions which we might put into practice. One particularly useful strategy for improving activist spaces is the anarchist ethic of 'pre-figurative politics'...

AUTONOMOUS ORGANISING – LESSONS FROM QUEERUPTION

What does it mean to organize autonomously? Why are autonomous communities do important? What is a DIY politic? Discussion focused around the Queeruption gathering in Sydney in February and your own experiences - lessons learnt, problems, questions and the positive, how to develop on the experiences we have.



HOW THE RIGHT THINK

In 1970, in a time of anti-war activism, and the feminist and queer revolutions, Richard Nixon's Attorney General John Mitchell gave a press conference. After six years of leftist upheaval in the US, he'd had enough. Spouting off to reporters, Mitchell declared "this country's going so far to the right, you are not even going to recognize it". The reporters laughed.

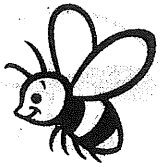
But thirty years later, Mitchell's threat has proved correct. The noughties are the third decade of what's become known as the Right wing "Backlash" in the United States. Gains on social and economic issues alike are being lost. The welfare state has become the warfare state. But how do conservatives think? And where does their philosophy come from historically?

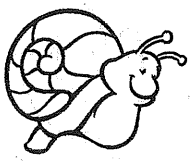
Using the United States as an example, I'm going to be offering a history and breakdown of contemporary conservatism. Because today, with the right in charge in Amerika, and at home, it not just enough to laugh off the Bush empire.

It's time to find out the scary truth about the Right, so that the Left can finally fight back (pun intended).

MOVEMENT ACTION PLAN

What does movements lead to success? What are the typical mistakes movement activists make? The Movement Action Plan (MAP) is a model describing the typical development of successful social movement. Developed by American activist Bill Moyer, the MAP is an evolving set of strategic models and methods that help activists to believe in their own political power and to better understand, evaluate, plan and conduct social movements. In this short workshop we will present the core of MAP and will discuss how it can be used by activists. With examples from different countries we will show how MAP can be applied to different situations and movements.





FEAR & LOATHING IN A SECURITY STATE

As police forces and courts are given increased powers to suppress any challenges to the authority of the state is it possible to not be afraid? And maybe we should all be just a little scared. The police are willing to use greater violence and the court system is intended to intimidate. It's nearly all enough to make you just give up and stop challenging the state. How activists collectively deal with the mental consequences – anxiety, depression, maddening anger – of living in (varying degrees of) fear is crucial for those who increasingly feel that this struggle is long-term and run-ins with police, the courts and even prison are inevitable.

GUERILLA ART

Spaces are quadroned off, scrutinised, and offenders to the space are penalised. Private ownership. Behind the confines of that space contains you and I and our art. We don't need to just piss in that space again, but desecrate the very walls that uphold it. The State? In their wake people will birth ideas like babies.

The workshop will be divided into two parts. The first part explores different conceptions behind presenting and making art in the public sphere. The discussion will pull from ideas that have inspired various artists/activists to pursue this form of social change and expression. Both artists and activists will talk about their experiences and ideology behind stencilling, graffiti, performance, spoken poetry, and art for protests (theatre and visual).

The second part of the workshop will include schemes of application to the Forbes conference, and some skill sharing.

It's predicted that the workshop won't provide enough time for full skill sharing, so a separate day will be set aside purely for creating against Forbes.

EXPERIENCES OF WORK

In this workshop those attending will talk about their experiences of wage slavery and any resistance they have taken part in at work.

"Civil disobedience...is not our problem. Our problem is civil obedience. Our problem is that numbers of people all over the world have obeyed the dictates of the leaders of their governments and have gone to war, and millions have been killed because of this obedience...Our problem is that people are obedient all over the world in the face of starvation and stupidity and war and cruelty. Our problem is that people are obedient while the jails are full of petty theives and all the while grand theives are running the country."

Howard Zinn "Failure to Quit"

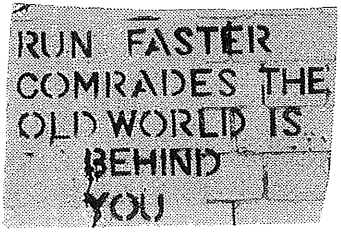
Excerpt from

Reflections on Civil Disobedience

By Sergio Fiedler

Making the antagonism between an oppressive social order and the multitude visible might not end up in a revolution, but it can have very important social and political repercussions. As verity Burgmann argues, even the success of moderate demands and actions depends on groups of activists making "unreasonable" proposals. Civil disobedience is therefore, about being realistic by demanding the impossible. What is truly real always lies within the impossible. Civil disobedience is to make a point by standing on the performative power of the outrageous, where the most unreasonable position becomes the only guarantee for the survival of the ethical act. In other words, civil disobedience is an act of political intervention that seeks to change the field of meaning of what is considered possible. "When the stick is bent in the wrong way – as it is the case today – it is necessary in order to put the world back on track, to hold it, and bend it in the opposite direction until the stick is right."

Civil disobedience is the "short circuit between the present and the future" where we are for a moment of our lives "allowed to act as if the utopian future were already at the hands, just there to be grabbed".



In contrast to our daily routines within a consumer society such as waged labour, civil disobedience is not another form hardship or sacrifice we need to undergo in order to achieve a "good" and "moral" society at the end of the road. Certainly, as it often the case, civil disobedience exposes the demonstrators to the violence of the State. In this respect civil disobedience carries within it a profound sense of collective self-sacrifice and hardship, where what is dearest to us – our bodies – becomes an avenue of resistance. However, unlike the self-sacrifice of the assembly line or the suicide-bomber for that matter, the hardship of civil disobedience is a sacrifice over which a living future of freedom and happiness already cast it's shadow.

For us, therefore, civil disobedience is the opportunity to open a space to communicate with each other, to develop and forge political and social relations that are based on solidarity, collective reciprocity and absolute democracy, and not competition and greed. Civil disobedience is not about violence, but about the gentleness and tenderness of a multitude. In a society where we have to commute between work and home in packed trains and buses without talking to each other, a collective act like this is a true moment of grace.

From there the subversive joyfulness and carnivalesque atmosphere often inherent within civil disobedience, not matter the different tactical questions, the police repression or the practical difficulties that often protesters need to confront. The disobedient is not a rent a crowd herded into the streets by leadership. The disobedient is not a grey mob fuelled by social resentment but a multitude inspired and empowered by the possibility of emancipation. That is the reason, and to paraphrase Zizek, why the disobedient is, even if only for a brief moment, already free while fighting for freedom; she is already happy while fighting for happiness. When that sense of freedom and happiness are acted out against the background of a country that incarcerates immigrants and refugees and raids Muslim families in the middle of the night, civil disobedience become the political proof that dignity and hope still exist, and that in fact, we are still alive.

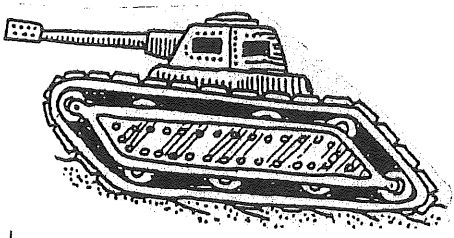
US neo-con spruikers to descend on Sydney
James Goodman

In late August the Sydney Opera House hosts a crew of corporate spruikers. The neo-conservative lobby machine - Forbes Global - is coming to town. We will be treated to the edifying spectacle of an iconic public building given over to corporate conferencing. Steve Forbes, the quintessential boy-born-with-a-silver-spoon, signatory of the infamous 'Project for a New American Century', will regale us with his far-right Republican neo-conservativism. Bob Carr and John Howard will stroke his ego on our behalf, extending our hand of welcome to the esteemed gathering.

A great opportunity, our industry minister says, 'to tell the world about Australia's business advantage'. And for those can afford the small fee of US$5000, what an opportunity to press the flesh with 'an exclusive group of senior executives'. The NSW development department has come to the party as a 'host sponsor', no doubt assisting with venue access. Bob Carr was an honoured guest at last year's Forbes Global conference in Hong Kong, which also hosted the likes of David Davies from Philip Morris International, speaking on the 'responsible corporation', and Richard Perle of the American Enterprise Institute, Assistant Secretary of Defence under Reagan and Chair of the US Defence Policy Board until he had to resign in 2003 due to links with a US military contractor.

Last year's Forbes CEO conference, held in New York, also broke new ground. In the midst of the US presidential campaign it focused on the 'politics of business'. Forbes publisher and chair, Caspar Weinberger, led discussions on how to deal with 'harsh awareness from the media, NGOs, "stakeholders" and nasty web-loggers'. Delegates wrestled with urgent dilemmas, such as 'how can CEO's justify outsourcing?', and 'what is the best way to deal with activist shareholder organisations?' Weinberger, of course, as former Secretary of Defence (and Perle's boss) under Reagan, would have some knowledge of how to address such challenges. Weinberger joined Forbes in 1987 when his political career came to an end after being directly linked to providing covert assistance for right-wing guerrillas in Nicaragua, funded from arms sales to Iran.

Ironically enough, Forbes now leads the charge in the US business world against the 'Axis of Evil' (which of course includes Iran). Backing the US 'War on Terror' to the hilt, Forbes is one of Bush's key business sponsors. In January 2004 it proudly announced 'Bush is Best'. Since Steve Forbes took over in 1990 the company has grown into a neo-con propaganda house, claiming a five million-strong readership for its international edition Forbes Global, and close to a million for its US-based Forbes Magazine. It is very much a family affair, with Steve, Robert, Christopher and Timothy all in executive roles. In all its permutations - from its listings of 'top' companies, 'richest people' and 'celebrities', to its thirty-five monthly 'investment newsletters', its several magazines and conferences, its online video and weekly slot on Fox News, the Forbes machine preaches the neo-con script.



A glance at the Forbes archive reveals the business of neo-conservatism, warts and all. In October 2002 Forbes rattled the sabres for business, claiming that 'Hitting OPEC By Way of Baghdad' would cut oil prices and offer 'juicy deals' in a postwar Iraq. In March 2003, immediately before invasion, the magazine was charting the 'War Dividend', an oil 'gush' that would 'recoup the cost of an Iraqi war'. The 'cost' of invasion and reconstruction was estimated at '$50 billion or so', rather less than the $182 billion and rising as of 20 July 2005 (see costofwar.com). As if Iraq was not enough, in early 2003 the magazine mapped its own 'atlas of evil and discord', throwing Pakistan, Indonesia, Philippines, Malaysia, Japan, South Korea, Taiwan, Brazil, Colombia and Venezuela into the ring, as well as the familiar candidates.

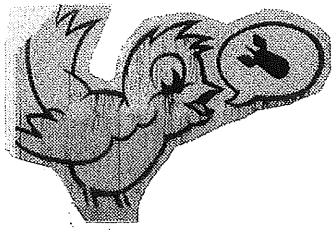
For Forbes, war spells profit: its Security Industry Analyst, a newsletter for 'stocks in homeland and security industries', picks booming defence contractors.

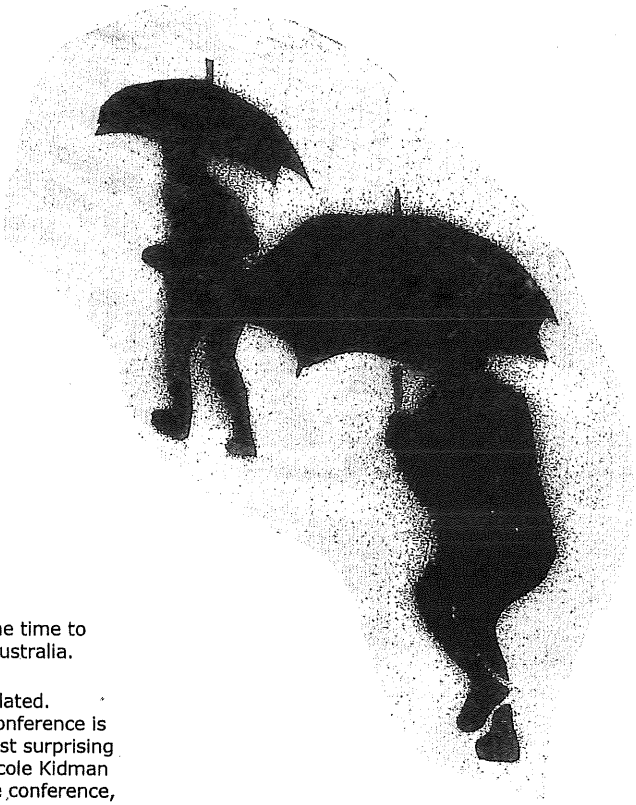
In March 2003, on the eve of the war on Iraq dollar-signs were flashing at the Analyst - 'over the last month', it gloated, 'we have seen a handsome war premium'. Today the newsletter compares the current security stocks boom with the 'early days' of the dot.com era. A report from 2003 on missile manufacturer Raytheon is typical: 'U.S. military might in Afghanistan and Iraq has heightened interest worldwide in our weaponry... good news for defense contractor Raytheon'. With the sale of each missile system 'worth another 35 cents a share', the Analyst states 'higher Pentagon spending has returned the company to profitability', suggesting 'this stock likely won't be shot down again soon'.

The Security Industry Analyst position is simple: 'we like to invest in security companies that have dual streams of revenue' - that is, companies with government contracts. It actively lobbies for increased government expenditure on security services, and greater support for the 'security industry'. In 2002 for instance it argued the government should protect the entire industry from exposure to 'uncontrolled liability', extending coverage already provided for the defence giants such as Lockheed Martin. Elsewhere it calls for increased use of biometric testing and racial profiling by government authorities, while recommending companies which would benefit from greater take-up of the required technologies.

Forbes Magazine, meanwhile, reassures investors they should never feel guilty about profiting from war. In early July this year, under the headline 'Screw Osama I'm buying Stocks', readers were offered valuable advice: 'The war on Terror is far from over and security stocks should have a place on your portfolio'. The day after the London bombings the headline story spoke loud and proud: 'Markets move higher as the world mourns'. Analysts picked-out the latest defence stocks for their readers, albeit with the caveat that 'it would be irresponsible for us or anyone to encourage profiting from another's misfortune... '.

Forbes - this quintessential front organization for neo-cons - has gained a foothold in the Australian political establishment. The Opera House conference clearly signals their





confidence that now is the time to bring their message to Australia.

They may have miscalculated. Controversy about the conference is mounting, and in the most surprising of fields. Reports that Nicole Kidman would be speaking at the conference, for $1000 a minute, have appeared on celebrity pages, from the Sun to the Kerala Times, to the Sydney Morning Herald. She may now be reconsidering her involvement - not least as the Forbes top-100 'celebrity list' places her at number 74 (two slots behind the Eagles!).

The Opera House conference itself runs over three days, 30 August - 1 September, and is preceded by the Sydney Social Forum, 27-29 August, with a major public meeting planned at Circular Quay for the 29th. A number of campaign groups are organising to protest against the conference itself, with a demonstration on 30 August at 5 pm at the Opera House. The Forbes-Australia push will not go unquestioned.

James Goodman co-convenes the Research Initiative in International Activism, and teaches at UTS.

- we need to increase defense spending significantly if we are to carry out our global responsibilities today and modernize our armed forces for the future;

- we need to strengthen our ties to democratic allies and to challenge regimes hostile to our interests and values;

- we need to promote the cause of political and economic freedom abroad;

- we need to accept responsibility for America's unique role in preserving and extending an international order friendly to our security, our prosperity, and our principles.

Such a Reaganite policy of military strength and moral clarity may not be fashionable today. But it is necessary if the United States is to build on the successes of this past century and to ensure our security and our greatness in the next.

Elliott Abrams Gary Bauer William J. Bennett Jeb Bush
Dick Cheney Eliot A. Cohen Midge Decter Paula Dobriansky Steve Forbes
Aaron Friedberg Francis Fukuyama Frank Gaffney Fred C. Ikle
Donald Kagan Zalmay Khalilzad I. Lewis Libby Norman Podhoretz
Dan Quayle Peter W. Rodman Stephen P. Rosen Henry S. Rowen
Donald Rumsfeld Vin Weber George Weigel Paul Wolfowitz

(PROJECT FOR A NEW AMERICAN CENTURY STATEMENT OF PRINCIPLES AND SIGNATORIES)

Who Profits? Who Pays? Corporate Australia in Iraq

"What floor are you going to?" a woman asks as a group of 20 activists cram their way into the lift.
"17"
"Oh no you're not!" she shouts and attempts to block the buttons. The activists scramble to another lift and she leaps out to run and call security. The woman happens to be an office manager for the Worley Group, an office these people are on their way to occupy. The activists make it to the 17th floor where the secretary mistakenly lets them through the front door. Angry employees attempt to usher them out but they are going nowhere. Under the slogan "occupy the occupiers" the Worley Group, a major engineering and infrastructure company, now find their everyday business disrupted.

So who are Australia's war profiteers?

Australian businesses have been quick to snap up opportunities in Iraq with the assistance of the federal government and Austrade. In April 2004, the government put on a "Rebuilding Iraq Subcontracting Conference" which was also attended by William Lash from the US department of commerce. Austrade also has permanent staff in Bagdad to assist Australian companies.

By far the biggest war profiteer is the Worley Group, a massive oil and infrastructure company that provides most of Melbourne's gas through the Longford gas plant. Worley, along with the US based Parsons Corporation, have a US $800 million contract to manage oil infrastructures and distribution in northern Iraq. The contract awarded by the US Army Corps of Engineers, essentially acts to privatise Iraqi oil resources, with the profits shipped out of Iraq back to the US and Australia. The US Army Corps of Engineers routinely awards contracts to foreign rather than Iraqi business. They are awarded by the occupiers to the benefit of the occupiers. Ordinary Iraqis have no say in who will manage the countries resources.

ANZ Bank is part of a consortium led by JP Morgan to manage the Trade Bank of Iraq. The trade bank acts to promote the interests of western business in Iraq by encouraging imported products to flood the Iraqi market. In this way the Iraqi economy becomes more and more reliant on outside business to the detriment of it's own economy. Bega, for example, are exporting cheese in a can to Iraq. Trade Bank bureaucrats tour the world encouraging corporations to take advantage of business opportunities in Iraq now that its economy has been opened up for the plunder.

Woodside, Australia's second largest oil and gas company, has signed a $2.5 million deal with the Iraqi Oil Ministry to explore the potential of oil and gas projects in northern Iraq. Woodside are also working in conjunction with Curtin University in Perth to train Iraqi Oil Ministry personnel. Woodside is 34% owned by Royal Dutch Shell and is also involved, with the assistance of the Australian government, in stealing oil and gas inside East Timor's maritime boundary, something the East Timorese have had little luck in challenging.

The list goes on and on. Mitsubishi Australia have provided Magna vehicles to the Iraqi police force, Patrick Corporation, famous for their busting of the Maritime

Union, helped get Baghdad Airport functioning and MultieMedia are providing $5 million worth of satellite internet services for the US military, keeping the occupation online. Multiemedia are also looking a little shaky losing 10 million in 2003/04. Hervey Bay's Seabird Aviation will be providing the Iraqi Airforce with 100 SEEKER SB7L-360 surveillance aircraft over the next three years. In a press release from Trade Minister Mark Vaile on the 12th of August "Seabird's Principal, Don Adams, said the company had worked closely with Austrade and Tradestart staff over the past three years to secure the joint venture." We might question if the negotiations that began three years ago were with Saddam's regime, or with someone else? If Saddam was so 'evil' why was the Australian government negotiating to sell him surveillance aircraft? And if they weren't negotiating with Saddam's regime, who were they negotiating with? Regardless of the answer, the chief motivation lies in potential profiteering rather than the lies of "assisting ordinary Iraqis" that western businesses are so fond of draping themselves in.

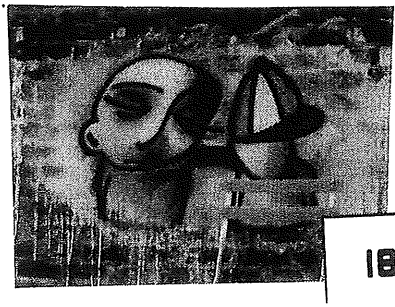
Whether it's the Snowy Mountain Engineering Corporation, the Australian Wheat Board or GRM International, Australian corporations have been very successful in securing contracts as part of the neo-colonisation of Iraq and taking advantage of the "region's most promising market" in the words of the 2005 Rebuild Iraq Expo website.

In this sense, one can't demand "troops out" without simultaneously demanding "corporations out!" During the recent Australian election then opposition leader Mark Latham's "troops out" proposal would have left most military personal in Iraq to "protect Australian interests"; that is to protect the businesses profiting from the occupation.

After the official beginning of the war on March 20 2003 the massive anti-war movement seemed to almost immediately die away. There was a resignation that the war had not been stopped and so the campaign was over. But the war continues, as does Australian complicity in the crimes being committed in Iraq.

If we want to end the war, one way is to put pressure on those companies profiting from it, to make operating in Iraq not worth the cost. Since the bottom line is the only thing that counts, holding up production, exposing the lie that these businesses are there to help ordinary Iraqis, and interfering with "business as usual" will be crucial tactics in building a resistance to end the war.

By and_



Profits of war

Halliburton has become a byword for the cosy links between the White House and Texan big business. But how did the company run in the 90s by Dick Cheney secure a deal that guaranteed it millions in profit every time the US military saw action? In this exclusive extract from his new book, Dan Briody reveals how the firm made a killing on the battleground

Thursday July 22, 2004

Guardian

On January 12 1991, Congress authorised President George HW Bush to engage Iraq in war. Just five days later, Operation Desert Storm commenced in Kuwait. As with the more recent war in the Gulf, it did not take long for the US to claim victory - it was all over by the end of February - but the clean-up would last longer, and was far more expensive than the military action itself. In a senseless act of desperation and defeat, Iraqi troops set fire to more than 700 Kuwaiti oil wells, resulting in a constant fog of thick, black smoke that turned day into night.

It was thought the mess would take no less than five years to clean up, as lakes of oil surrounding each well blazed out of control, making it nearly impossible to approach the burning wells, let alone extinguish them. But with the fighting over, Halliburton angled its way into the clean-up and rebuilding effort that was expected to cost around $200bn (£163bn) over the next 10 years.

The company sent 60 men to help with the firefighting effort. Meanwhile, its engineering and construction subsidiary Kellogg Brown & Root (KBR) won an additional $3m contract to assess the damage that the invasion had done to Kuwait's infrastructure - a contract whose value had multiplied seven times by the end of KBR's involvement. More significantly still, KBR won a contract to extract troops from Saudi Arabia after their services were no longer needed in the Gulf. Halliburton was back in the army logistics business in earnest for the first time since Vietnam. The end of the Gulf war saw nothing less than the rebirth of the military outsourcing business.

Military outsourcing was not new. Private firms had been aiding in war efforts since long before KBR won its first naval shipbuilding contract. But the nature of military outsourcing has changed dramatically in the last decade. The trend towards a "downsized" military began because of the "peace dividend" at the end of the cold war, and continued throughout the 1990s. This combination of a reduced military but continued conflict gave rise to an unprecedented new industry of private military firms. These firms would assist the military in everything from weapons procurement and maintenance to training of troops and logistics.

In the decade after the first Gulf war, the number of private contractors used in and around the battlefield increased tenfold. It has been estimated that there is now one private contractor for every 10 soldiers in Iraq. Companies such as Halliburton, which

became the fifth largest defence contractor in the nation during the 1990s, have played a critical role in this trend.

The story behind America's "super contract" begins in 1992, when the department of defence, then headed by Dick Cheney, was impressed with the work Halliburton did during its time in Kuwait. Sensing the need to bolster its forces in the event of further conflicts of a similar nature, the Pentagon asked private contractors to bid on a $3.9m contract to write a report on how a private firm could provide logistical support to the army in the case of further military action.

The report was to examine 13 different "hot spots" around the world, and detail how services as varied as building bases to feeding the troops could be accomplished. The contractor that would potentially provide the services detailed in the report would be required to support the deployment of 20,000 troops over 180 days. It was a massive contingency plan, the first of its kind for the American military.

Thirty-seven companies tendered for the contract; KBR won it. The company was paid another $5m later that year to extend the plan to other locations and add detail.

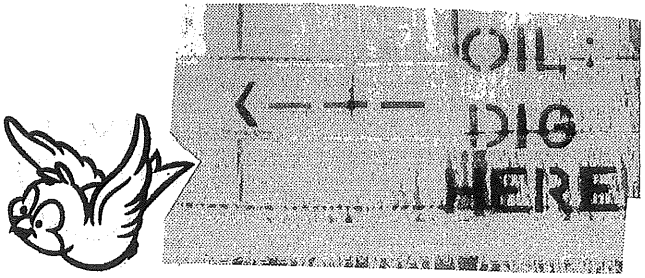
The KBR report, which remains classified to this day, convinced Cheney that it was indeed possible to create one umbrella contract and award it to a single firm. The contract became known as the Logistics Civil Augmentation Programme (Logcap) and has been called "the mother of all service contracts". It has been used in every American deployment since its award in 1992 - at a cost of several billion dollars (and counting). The lucky recipient of the first, five-year Logcap contract was the very same company hired to draw up the plan in the first place: KBR.

The Logcap contract pulled KBR out of its late 1980s doldrums and boosted the bottom line of Halliburton throughout the 1990s. It is, effectively, a blank cheque from the government. The contractor makes its money from a built-in profit percentage, anywhere from 1% to 9%, depending on various incentive clauses. When your profit is a percentage of the cost, the more you spend, the more you make.

Before the ink was dry on the first Logcap contract, the US army was deployed to Somalia in December 1992 as part of Operation Restore Hope. KBR employees were there before the army even arrived, and they were the last to leave. The firm made $109.7m in Somalia. In August 1994, they earned $6.3m from Operation Support Hope in Rwanda. In September of that same year, Operation Uphold Democracy in Haiti netted the company $150m. And in October 1994, Operation Vigilant Warrior made them another $5m.

In the spirit of "refuse no job", the company was building the base camps, supplying the troops with food and water, fuel and munitions, cleaning latrines, even washing their clothes. They attended the staff meetings and were kept up to speed on all the activities related to a given mission. They were becoming another unit in the US army.

The army's growing dependency on the company hit home when, in 1997, KBR lost the Logcap contract in a competitive rebid to rival Dyncorp. The army found it impossible to remove Brown & Root from their work in the Balkans - by far the most lucrative part of the contract - and so carved out the work in that theatre to keep it



with KBR. In 2001, the company won the Logcap contract again, this time for twice the normal term length: 10 years.

To the uninitiated, the appointment of Cheney to the chairman, president, and chief executive officer positions at Halliburton in August 1995, made little sense. Cheney had almost no business experience, having been a career politician and bureaucrat. Financial analysts downgraded the stock and the business press openly questioned the decision.

Cheney has been described by those who know him as everything from low-key to downright bland, but the confidence he inspired and the loyalty he professed made him an indispensable part of Donald Rumsfeld's rise to power. In the 1970s, Rumsfeld became Gerald Ford's White House chief of staff, with Cheney as his deputy. In those days, Cheney was assigned a codename by the secret service that perfectly summed up his disposition: "Backseat".

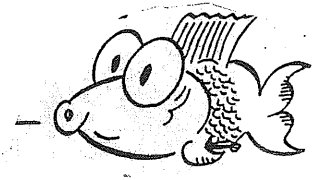
But Halliburton understood Cheney's value. With him as CEO, the company gained considerable leverage in Washington. Until Cheney's appointment in the autumn of 1995, Halliburton's business results had been decent. After a loss of $91m in 1993, the company had returned to profitability in 1994 with an operating profit of $236m. With the new revenue coming in from Logcap, Halliburton and its prize subsidiary, KBR, were back on track. Though Logcap was producing only modest revenues, it was successful in reintegrating KBR into the military machine.

The big opportunity came in December 1995, just two months after Cheney assumed the post of CEO, when the US sent thousands of troops to the Balkans as a peace-keeping force. As part of Operation Joint Endeavour, KBR was dispatched to Bosnia and Kosovo to support the army in its operations in the region. The task was massive in scope and size.

One example of the work KBR did in the Balkans was Camp Bondsteel. The camp was so large that the US general accounting office (GAO) likened it to "a small town". The company built roads, power generation, water and sewage systems, housing, a helicopter airfield, a perimeter fence, guard towers, and a detention centre. Bondsteel is the largest and most expensive army base since Vietnam. It also happens to be built in the path of the Albanian-Macedonian-Bulgarian Oil (Ambo) Trans-Balkan pipeline, the pipeline connecting the oil-rich Caspian Sea region to the rest of the world. The initial feasibility project for Ambo was done by KBR.

KBR's cash flow from Logcap ballooned under Cheney's tenure, jumping from $144m in 1994 to more than $423m in 1996, and the Balkans was the driving force. By 1999, the army was spending just under $1bn a year on KBR's work in the Balkans. The GAO issued a report in September 2000 charging serious cost-control problems in Bosnia, but KBR retains the contract to this day.

Meanwhile, Cheney was busy developing Halliburton's business in other parts of the world. "It is a false dichotomy that we have to choose between our commercial and other interests," he told the [public policy research foundation] Cato Institute in 1998, speaking out against economic sanctions levied by the Clinton administration against countries suspected of terrorist activity. "Our government has become sanctions-happy," he continued.



In particular, Cheney objected to sanctions against Libya and Iran, two countries with which Halliburton was already doing business regardless. Even more disconcerting, though, was the work the company did in Iraq. Between his stints as secretary of defence and vice-president, Cheney was in charge of Halliburton when it was circumventing strict UN sanctions, helping to rebuild Iraq and enriching Saddam Hussein.

In September 1998, Halliburton closed a $7.7bn stock merger with Dresser Industries (the company that gave George HW Bush his first job). The merger made Halliburton the largest oilfield services firm in the world. It also brought with it two foreign subsidiaries that were doing business with Iraq via the controversial Oil for Food programme. The two subsidiaries, Dresser Rand and Ingersoll Dresser Pump Co, signed $73m-worth of contracts for oil production equipment.

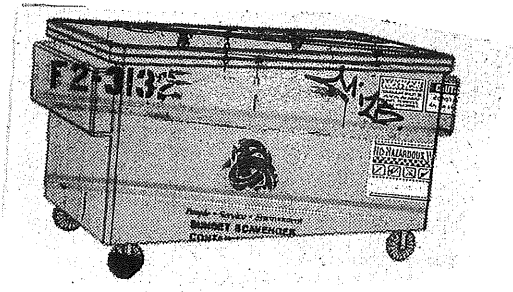
Cheney told the press during his 2000 run for vice-president that he had a "firm policy" against doing business with Iraq. He admitted to doing business with Iran and Libya, but "Iraq's different," he said. Cheney told ABC TV: "We've not done any business in Iraq since UN sanctions were imposed on Iraq in 1990, and I had a standing policy that I wouldn't do that."

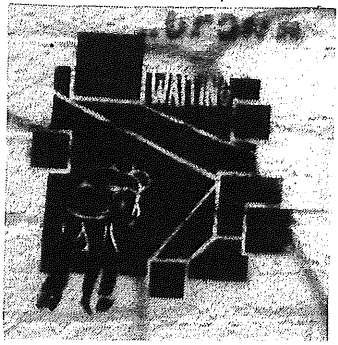
Three weeks later, Cheney was forced to admit the business ties, but claimed ignorance. He told reporters that he was not aware of Dresser's business in Iraq, and that besides, Halliburton had divested itself of both companies by 2000. In the meantime, the companies had done another $30m-worth of business in Iraq before being sold off.

The Dresser merger was, it appeared, the crowning achievement of the Cheney years at Halliburton. But Cheney left Halliburton several other legacies. David Gribbin, Cheney's former chief of staff, became Halliburton's chief lobbyist in Washington. Admiral Joe Lopez, a former commander of the sixth fleet, was hired to be KBR's governmental operations expert. Together, Cheney's team made Halliburton one of the top government contractors in the country. KBR had nearly doubled its government contracts, from $1.2bn in the five years prior to his arrival, to $2.3bn during his five years as CEO. Halliburton soared from 73rd to 18th on the Pentagon's list of top contractors.

After 9/11, KBR went to work on the war on terrorism, building the 1,000 detention cells at Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, for terrorist suspects, at a cost of $52m. The work had to feel familiar to KBR: it had done the exact same job 35 years earlier in Vietnam. When troops were deployed to Afghanistan, so was KBR. It built US bases in Bagram and Kandahar for $157m. As it had done in the past, KBR had men on the ground before the first troops even arrived in most locations. They readied the camps, fed the troops, and hauled away the waste. And they did it like the military would have done it: fast, efficient, and effective. It was good work, solid revenues, but nothing like the windfall the company had experienced in the Balkans.

In addition, Halliburton won the contract for restoring the Iraqi oil infrastructure - a contract that was not competitively bid. It was given to Halliburton out of convenience, because it had developed the plan for fighting oil fires (all, by this time, extinguished). Despite the new business, the fortunes of Halliburton and its subsidiary have not prospered. The stock that Cheney cashed in near its peak, when he renewed his political career in 2000, has since plummeted. The main culprit was





the 1998 merger with Dresser, which saddled the company with asbestos liabilities that ultimately led to two Halliburton subsidiaries - one of them KBR - having to file for bankruptcy.

When Cheney left to become Bush's running mate, he took a golden parachute package - in addition to the stock options he was obliged to sell for $30m. In September 2003, Cheney insisted: "Since I've left Halliburton to become George Bush's vice-president, I've severed all my ties with the company, gotten rid of all my financial interests. I have no financial interest in Halliburton of any kind and haven't now for over three years."

The Congressional Research Service (CRS), a non-partisan agency that investigates political issues at the request of elected officials, says otherwise. Cheney has been receiving a deferred salary from Halliburton in the years since he left the company. In 2001, he received $205,298. In 2002, he drew $162,392. He is scheduled to receive similar payments through 2005, and has an insurance policy in place to protect the payments in the event that Halliburton should fold. In addition, Cheney still holds 433,333 unexercised stock options in Halliburton. He has agreed to donate any profits to charity.

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Excerpts from Arundhati Roy's Sydney Peace Prize Speech, 2004

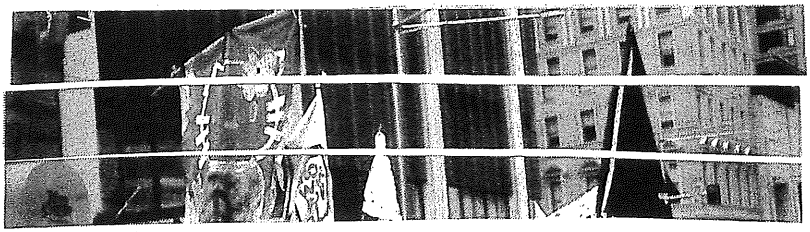
Today, it is not merely justice itself, but the idea of justice that is under attack. The assault on vulnerable, fragile sections of society is at once so complete, so cruel and so clever - all encompassing and yet specifically targeted, blatantly brutal and yet unbelievably insidious - that its sheer audacity has eroded our definition of justice. It has forced us to lower our sights, and curtail our expectations. Even among the well-intentioned, the expansive, magnificent concept of justice is gradually being substituted with the reduced, far more fragile discourse of 'human rights'.

If you think about it, this is an alarming shift of paradigm. The difference is that notions of equality, of parity have been pried loose and eased out of the equation. It's a process of attrition. Almost unconsciously, we begin to think of justice for the rich and human rights for the poor. Justice for the corporate world, human rights for its victims. Justice for Americans, human rights for Afghans and Iraqis. Justice for the Indian upper castes, human rights for Dalits and Adivasis (if that.) Justice for white Australians, human rights for Aboriginals and immigrants (most times, not even that.)

It is becoming more than clear that violating human rights is an inherent and necessary part of the process of implementing a coercive and unjust political and economic structure on the world. Without the violation of human rights on an enormous scale, the neo-liberal project would remain in the dreamy realm of policy. But increasingly Human Rights violations are being portrayed as the unfortunate, almost accidental fallout of an otherwise acceptable political and economic system. As though they're a small problem that can be mopped up with a little extra attention from some NGOs. This is why in areas of heightened conflict - in Kashmir and in Iraq for example - Human Rights Professionals are regarded with a degree of suspicion. Many resistance movements in poor countries which are fighting huge injustice and questioning the underlying principles of what constitutes "liberation" and "development", view Human Rights NGOs as modern day missionaries who've come to take the ugly edge off Imperialism. To defuse political anger and to maintain the status quo.

It has been only a few weeks since a majority of Australians voted to re-elect Prime Minister John Howard who, among other things, led Australia to participate in the illegal invasion and occupation of Iraq. The invasion of Iraq will surely go down in history as one of the most cowardly wars ever fought. It was a war in which a band of rich nations, armed with enough nuclear weapons to destroy the world several times over, rounded on a poor nation, falsely accused it of having nuclear weapons, used the United Nations to force it to disarm, then invaded it, occupied it and are now in the process of selling it.

I speak of Iraq, not because everybody is talking about it, (sadly at the cost of leaving other horrors in other places to unfurl in the dark), but because it is a sign of things to come. Iraq marks the beginning of a new cycle. It offers us an



opportunity to watch the Corporate-Military cabal that has come to be known as 'Empire' at work. In the new Iraq the gloves are off.

As the battle to control the world's resources intensifies, economic colonialism through formal military aggression is staging a comeback. Iraq is the logical culmination of the process of corporate globalization in which neo-colonialism and neo-liberalism have fused. If we can find it in ourselves to peep behind the curtain of blood, we would glimpse the pitiless transactions taking place backstage. But first, briefly, the stage itself.

In 1991 US President George Bush senior mounted Operation Desert Storm. Tens of thousands of Iraqis were killed in the war. Iraq's fields were bombed with more than 300 tonnes of depleted uranium, causing a fourfold increase in cancer among children. For more than 13 years, twenty four million Iraqi people have lived in a war zone and been denied food and medicine and clean water. In the frenzy around the US elections, let's remember that the levels of cruelty did not fluctuate whether the Democrats or the Republicans were in the White House. Half a million Iraqi children died because of the regime of economic sanctions in the run up to Operation Shock and Awe.

Until recently, while there was a careful record of how many US soldiers had lost their lives, we had no idea of how many Iraqis had been killed. US General Tommy Franks said "We don't do body counts" (meaning Iraqi body counts). He could have added "We don't do the Geneva Convention either." A new, detailed study, fast-tracked by the Lancet medical journal and extensively peer reviewed, estimates that 100,000 Iraqis have lost their lives since the 2003 invasion. That's one hundred halls full of people - like this one. That's one hundred halls full of friends, parents, siblings, colleagues, lovers.like you. The difference is that there aren't many children here today--let's not forget Iraq's children. Technically that bloodbath is called precision bombing. In ordinary language, it's called butchering,

Most of this is common knowledge now. Those who support the invasion and vote for the invaders cannot take refuge in ignorance. They must truly believe that this epic brutality is right and just or, at the very least, acceptable because it's in their interest.

So the 'civilized' 'modern' world - built painstakingly on a legacy of genocide, slavery and colonialism - now controls most of the world's oil. And most of the world's weapons, most of the world's money, and most of the world's media. The embedded, corporate media in which the doctrine of Free Speech has been substituted by the doctrine of Free If You Agree Speech.

The UN's Chief Weapons Inspector Hans Blix said he found no evidence of nuclear weapons in Iraq. Every scrap of evidence produced by the US and British governments was found to be false - whether it was reports of Saddam Hussein buying uranium from Niger, or the report produced by British Intelligence which was discovered to have been plagiarized from an old student

dissertation. And yet, in the prelude to the war, day after day the most 'respectable' newspapers and TV channels in the US , headlined the 'evidence' of Iraq's arsenal of weapons of nuclear weapons. It now turns out that the source of the manufactured 'evidence' of Iraq's arsenal of nuclear weapons was Ahmed Chalabi who, (like General Suharto of Indonesia, General Pinochet of Chile, the Shah of Iran, the Taliban and of course, Saddam Hussein himself) - was bankrolled with millions of dollars from the good old CIA.

And so, a country was bombed into oblivion. It's true there have been some murmurs of apology. Sorry 'bout that folks, but we have really have to move on. Fresh rumours are coming in about nuclear weapons in Eye-ran and Syria. And guess who is reporting on these fresh rumours? The same reporters who ran the bogus 'scoops' on Iraq. The seriously embedded A Team.

The head of Britain's BBC had to step down and one man committed suicide because a BBC reporter accused the Blair administration of 'sexing up' intelligence reports about Iraq's WMD programme. But the head of Britain retains his job even though his government did much more than 'sex up' intelligence reports. It is responsible for the illegal invasion of a country and the mass murder of its people.

Visitors to Australia like myself, are expected to answer the following question when they fill in the visa form: Have you ever committed or been involved in the commission of war crimes or crimes against humanity or human rights? Would George Bush and Tony Blair get visas to Australia? Under the tenets of International Law they must surely qualify as war criminals.

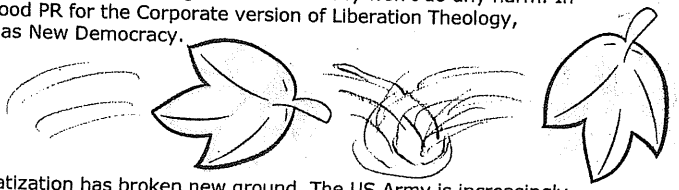
However, to imagine that the world would change if they were removed from office is naive. The tragedy is that their political rivals have no real dispute with their policies. The fire and brimstone of the US election campaign was about who would make a better 'Commander-in-Chief' and a more effective manager of the American Empire. Democracy no longer offers voters real choice. Only specious choice.

Even though no weapons of mass destruction have been found in Iraq - stunning new evidence has revealed that Saddam Hussein was planning a weapons programme. (Like I was planning to win an Olympic Gold in synchronized swimming.) Thank goodness for the doctrine of pre-emptive strike. God knows what other evil thoughts he harbored - sending Tampax in the mail to American senators, or releasing female rabbits in burqas into the London underground. No doubt all will be revealed in the free and fair trial of Saddam Hussein that's coming up soon in the New Iraq.

All except the chapter in which we would learn of how the US and Britain plied him with money and material assistance at the time he was carrying out murderous attacks on Iraqi Kurds and Shias. All except the chapter in which we would learn that a 12,000 page report submitted by the Saddam Hussein government to the UN, was censored by the United States because it lists twenty-four US corporations that participated in Iraq's pre-Gulf War nuclear and conventional weapons programme. (They include Bechtel, DuPont, , Eastman Kodak, Hewlett Packard, International Computer Systems and Unisys.)

So Iraq has been 'liberated.' Its people have been subjugated and its markets have been 'freed'. That's the anthem of neo-liberalism. Free the markets. Screw the people.

The US government has privatized and sold entire sectors of Iraq's economy. Economic policies and tax laws have been re-written. Foreign companies can now buy 100% of Iraqi firms and expatriate the profits. This is an outright violation of international laws that govern an occupying force, and is among the main reasons for the stealthy, hurried charade in which power was 'handed over' to an 'interim Iraqi government'. Once handing over of Iraq to the Multi-nationals is complete, a mild dose of genuine democracy won't do any harm. In fact it might be good PR for the Corporate version of Liberation Theology, otherwise known as New Democracy.



In New Iraq, privatization has broken new ground. The US Army is increasingly recruiting private mercenaries to help in the occupation. The advantage with mercenaries is that when they're killed they're not included in the US soldiers' body count. It helps to manage public opinion, which is particularly important in an election year. Prisons have been privatized. Torture has been privatized. We have seen what that leads to. Other attractions in New Iraq include newspapers being shut down. Television stations bombed. Reporters killed. US soldiers have opened fire on crowds of unarmed protestors killing scores of people. The only kind of resistance that has managed to survive is as crazed and brutal as the occupation itself. Is there space for a secular, democratic, feminist, non-violent resistance in Iraq? There isn't really.

That is why it falls to those of us living outside Iraq to create that mass-based, secular and non-violent resistance to the US occupation. If we fail to do that, then we run the risk of allowing the idea of resistance to be hi-jacked and conflated with terrorism and that will be a pity because they are not the same thing.

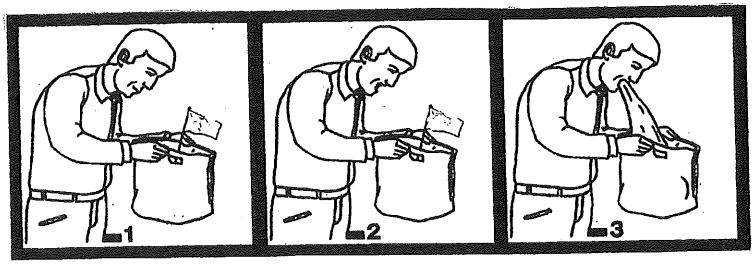
So what does peace mean in this savage, corporatized, militarized world? What does it mean in a world where an entrenched system of appropriation has created a situation in which poor countries which have been plundered by colonizing regimes for centuries are steeped in debt to the very same countries that plundered them, and have to repay that debt at the rate of 382 billion dollars a year? What does peace mean in a world in which the combined wealth of the world's 587 billionaires exceeds the combined gross domestic product of the world's 135 poorest countries? Or when rich countries that pay farm subsidies of a billion dollars a day, try and force poor countries to drop their subsidies? What does peace mean to people in occupied Iraq, Palestine, Kashmir, Tibet and Chechnya? Or to the aboriginal people of Australia? Or the Ogoni of Nigeria? Or the Kurds in Turkey? Or the Dalits and Adivasis of India? What does peace mean to non-muslims in Islamic countries, or to women in Iran, Saudi Arabia and Afghanistan? What does it mean to the millions who are being uprooted from their lands by dams and development projects? What does peace mean to the poor who are being actively robbed of their resources and for whom everyday life is a grim battle for water, shelter, survival and, above all, some semblance of dignity? For them, peace is war.

We know very well who benefits from war in the age of Empire. But we must also ask ourselves honestly who benefits from peace in the age of Empire? War mongering is criminal. But talking of peace without talking of justice could easily become advocacy for a kind of capitulation. And talking of justice without unmasking the institutions and the systems that perpetrate injustice, is beyond hypocritical.

It's easy to blame the poor for being poor. It's easy to believe that the world is being caught up in an escalating spiral of terrorism and war. That's what allows the American President to say "You're either with us or with the terrorists." But we know that that's a spurious choice. We know that terrorism is only the privatization of war. That terrorists are the free marketers of war. They believe that the legitimate use of violence is not the sole prerogative of the State.

It is mendacious to make moral distinction between the unspeakable brutality of terrorism and the indiscriminate carnage of war and occupation. Both kinds of violence are unacceptable. We cannot support one and condemn the other.

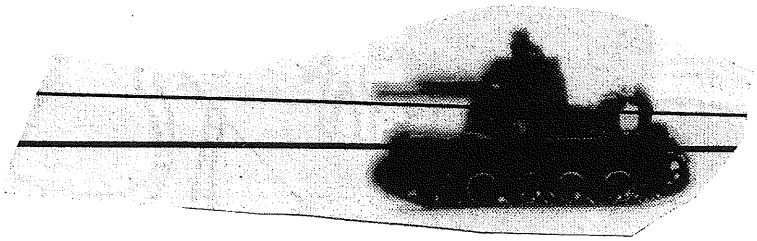
The real tragedy is that most people in the world are trapped between the horror of a putative peace and the terror of war. Those are the two sheer cliffs we're hemmed in by. The question is: How do we climb out of this crevasse?



For those who are materially well-off, but morally uncomfortable, the first question you must ask yourself is do you really want to climb out of it? How far are you prepared to go? Has the crevasse become too comfortable?

If you really want to climb out, there's good news and bad news.

The good news is that the advance party began the climb some time ago. They're already half way up. Thousands of activists across the world have been hard at work preparing footholds and securing the ropes to make it easier for the rest of us. There isn't only one path up. There are hundreds of ways of doing it. There are hundreds of battles being fought around the world that need your skills, your minds, your resources. No battle is irrelevant. No victory is too small.



The bad news is that colorful demonstrations, weekend marches and annual trips to the World Social Forum are not enough. There have to be targeted acts of real civil disobedience with real consequences. Maybe we can't flip a switch and conjure up a revolution. But there are several things we could do. For example, you could make a list of those corporations who have profited from the invasion of Iraq and have offices here in Australia. You could name them, boycott them, occupy their offices and force them out of business. If it can happen in Bolivia, it can happen in India. It can happen in Australia. Why not?

That's only a small suggestion. But remember that if the struggle were to resort to violence, it will lose vision, beauty and imagination. Most dangerous of all, it will marginalize and eventually victimize women. And a political struggle that does not have women at the heart of it, above it, below it, and within it is no struggle at all.

The point is that the battle must be joined. As the wonderful American historian Howard Zinn put it: You Can't Be Neutral on a Moving Train.

Arundhati Roy

EXPOSE THE CLIMATE HYPOCRITES

Converge on the Climate Hypocrite Pact's First Meeting this November.

The Australian Student Environment Network has announced a call-out for grassroots climate activists to converge in a climate carnivale of protest at the first meeting of the Climate Hypocrite Pact this November in Adelaide.

Read on to find out why..

On July 28th this year, a new climate agreement was announced between some of the world's worst greenhouse polluters - Australia, the United States, India, China and South Korea – ostensibly to commercially develop technological solutions to climate change.

The first meeting of the climate hypocrite pact will be held in Adelaide in November, where government representatives from each of the 5 countries will negotiate the details of the agreement, which the Howard Government sees as an "alternative to the Kyoto Protocol".

The climate hypocrite pact is yet another indication of the Howard government's irresponsible, industry-driven approach to climate change. Thinking that technology can save us from climate change is like rearranging deck chairs on the Titanic. Addressing climate change requires immediate and fundamental changes to the way our oil and coal-dependant society and economy is structured.

The climate secret pact aims for the development of commercially viable technologies by 2012, when the Kyoto Protocol comes into effect. By this time, temperature increases will have begun to majorly disturb ecosystems and mosquito spread disease will be spreading further, rising sea levels and more extreme weather will have created millions more climate refugees, agricultural crops will have begun to fail, and iconic natural wonders like the Daintree, Great Barrier Reef, and the Snowy Mountains will be well on their way to destruction.

Meanwhile, our government sits in corporate boardrooms with the major coal, oil and gas companies and funds expensive, unproven technological solutions like geosequestration (burying emissions underground) whilst slashing funding for renewable energy.

"We need to ensure that we develop technologies that will see energy expand, because we need more energy," stated Federal Environment Minister Ian Campbell, who also recently shocked the environmental community by denying that burning coal causes greenhouse emissions[1].

Australia has a mandatory renewable energy target of about 2 per cent of all electricity production, but the Government has refused to extend it. It is widely acknowledged in the environment movement that the reason for this, and the general reluctance of the Federal government to deal with climate change in any constructive manner, is the close links between the Australian coal industry and the government.

[1] The denial was made in a submission by Senator Campbell to a Federal court challenge by a Qld environmental group, Wildlife Whitsunday. He made the statement on August 5, just days after warning Australians of the inevitability of global warming.

Even the former govt chief climate change official has stated that The Federal Government allows the fossil fuel, energy and mining industries too much influence on greenhouse policies, including the decision not to ratify the Kyoto Protocol.

Gwen Andrews, the Australian Greenhouse Office chief executive until 2002, has publicly stated that she was never asked to brief the Prime Minister, John Howard, on climate change during her four years in the role. She has confirmed what many environmentalists have been arguing for years – that energy, mining and resource interests are essentially directing Australia's policy on climate change.

Documents obtained under freedom of information legislation show multinationals warned the Government before last year's energy white paper - which largely reflected their thinking - that reducing emissions might endanger investment.

The documents, from the Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet, show:

- BHP Billiton and Rio Tinto said a national emissions trading scheme was "premature".

- The American oil giant Exxon Mobil advised "investments in current renewable energy technology are not economical". It said evidence on climate change was inconclusive.

- BHP Billiton warned "greenhouse imposts could threaten the competitive position of Australia" and the Minerals Council of Australia said targeting the energy sector over emissions "should be avoided".

- Fossil fuel companies called for government funding for research into geosequestration - burying carbon dioxide from coal-fired power plants - as the main strategy to reduce emissions.

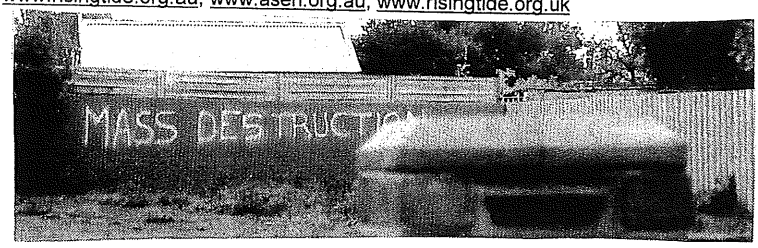
Between 1998 and 2004, five big resource companies gave at least $1.69 million to the Coalition and its foundations, according to the Australian Electoral Commission. Labor got $412,311 from the same sources in that period.

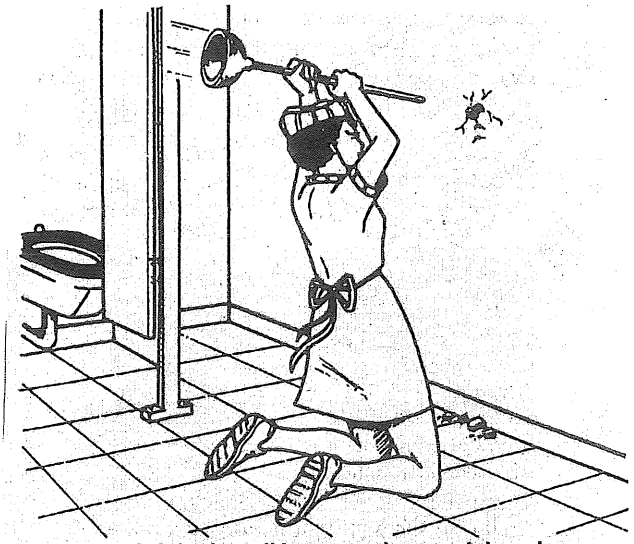
The government chief scientist until May, Robin Batterham, is a Rio Tinto executive and supports geosequestration. Lyall Howard, Mr Howard's nephew, is the firm's government affairs manager.

Focusing on technology to make burning fossil fuels cleaner instead of reducing emissions is just the latest in a series of climate-change inducing actions by Australia. The climate hypocrite pact's five member countries include four of the world's biggest coal producers - China, USA, India and Australia. "This is all about taxpayers' money being diverted from developing clean, renewable technologies to try to make burning coal less dirty," stated Greens Senator Bob Brown.

Down with climate change profiteers! Burning coal is like, sooo 18th century. No new coal, A clean energy future for Australia!! See you in Adelaide this November! Contact Anna for more info – info@asen.org.au, or call 0410 375 755.

www.risingtide.org.au, www.asen.org.au, www.risingtide.org.uk





Bang a hole in the wall large enough to crawl through.

Let's go AWOL

Anti-capitalist Autonomous Anti-authoritarian WOmen's Liberationists

AWOL @ Subplot: "Anarcha, feminism, autonomy and every day liberation"

AWOL is a perspective, not an identity. The AWOL perspective is anarchist and feminist. The AWOL perspective is relevant to a class perspective. We are opposed to all hierarchy, and others should join us in this actively, joyfully, as equals in struggle. We do not wish to be relegated to minority status, or elevated as 'specially disadvantaged' heroes. We think our struggle is vital and relevant to all struggles against oppression (of capital, racism, homophobia, poverty, knowledge, privilege, etc). Our struggle is broader than ourselves but it must be expressed through our means within our own situations.

Some priorities which shape an AWOL perspective:

Autonomy

- What is autonomy? How do we "get" autonomy? Is autonomy the same as anarchism? What's the difference?
- Can we define anarcha-feminism? (is it a 'movement', a philosophy, an attitude, or a last resort to banding together against hostile elements?)
- At what point do we cease to engage in "the broader movement" which never really included or represented us in the first place?

Unpaid Labour

Broad understanding that women's' labour in the home (and beyond) is

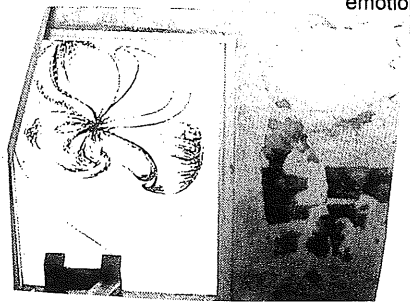
affection to males the world over – forever projecting permanent sexual availability, and existing in a prison/factory of domesticity.
- The role of the church, family and spectacle (perpetrated by the media) in cementing this

Opposing Sexual Violence

- Our direct / indirect experience of it
- strategies for dealing with it as it arises in everyday life in our "sub-cultures"
- sexual violence as all-pervasive "culture", permeating all dominant sexual imagery and our own sexual conditioning
- Reproductive freedom & Abortion and the current reactionary offensive
- reproductive autonomy in general: the right to knowledge and control over our own bodies; the deliberate lack of access to information about contraception, sexuality, motherhood and relationship choices, and menstruation, especially for young and not-so-young women

Lastly, an AWOL perspective is relevant to ALL other forms and areas of organising, and/or creation of social spaces.

contact: go to http://awol.blogsome.com and leave us a comment



central to the functioning of the capitalist system participation and support for the Global Women's' Strike, which takes place on IWD and highlights the need to divert funding from military spending, over to paying for 'caring work', largely unpaid (or grossly underpaid) – came out of the Wages for Housework Campaign, has taken off in many places around the world, including Venezuela.

Outworkers and fashion fascism

Women are exploited at both ends of the production equation within the "fashion" industries: as producers of garments, and as consumers bullied into spending big on clothes made by sweated labour. Meanwhile, narrow, manipulative, and inherently violent notions of beauty are imposed on us at every turn .

Queerness and Sexual Autonomy

- Shedding the layers of conditioning which represses our Autonomy, living out a sexuality that is autonomous, that is, not necessarily revolving around or even wanting men in the picture, and, that is entirely at odds with the socially-restricted role cut out for us by capitalist patriarchy.
- The dead weight of our rigorous training to repress our Autonomy: and into our sexual roles as – sex object (or aspiring sex object), obedient worker, dutiful housewife and child-bearer/child-rearer, discipliner of the "next wave of labour" (ie. Children), and all-round dispenser of emotional support and

No Borders Talk
Speak out at Sunil's trial 15/8/05

by Jeremy

It's pretty clear that this is a difficult time to be an activist. Everywhere there are renewed attacks on unions, people of colour, workers, the environment and more. A man gets shot on the subway because he's got brown skin. Sunil's on trial today and the case against him relies heavily on the circumstantial fact that he's a refugee activist.

So what are we going to do?

Many on the left seem to think that in conservative times we must choose a more conservative approach. We must put forward a more moderate, watered-down politics – in order to appeal to fearful voters and national party members. The Labor party calls for more troops in Afghanistan. Union officials dob in illegal immigrant workers.

This strategy is doomed to failure. Instead, as always, the choice is between truth and lies. When the lies become more conservative it doesn't mean we should start believing them or speaking them. Our task is still to speak the *truth*.

So, now more than ever, we need to *totally reject* racism, militarism, and nationalism.
We need to argue for a world without borders.

So to the people who base their politics on the lie that: 'Australia is a compassionate country.' We must say: 'Australia, like all states, is founded on war, genocide and paranoia. Get rid of Australia and all nations! Instead let's build *real* communities of *direct democracy* – locally and globally.'

And to the people who use the language of '*welcoming* refugees and treating them *humanely*', we must say again and again: 'Refugees are not coloured inferiors to be given compassion, let alone by the white *invaders* of this land.' Instead we must dump the white supremacist lies. And we must respect and learn from refugees who (like people of colour all over the world) are at the *front* of the struggle. We should follow their *lead*, in *challenging states and borders*.'

And finally to the people who believe the lie that: 'Our borders protect our standard of living', we must reply: 'Borders only protect the rich tiny minority.' The bosses of Nike are able to make millions by paying a-dollar-a-day to sweatshop workers, *because* those workers are enclosed in nation-state borders. And because corporations can move across borders while people can't, borders keep *our* wages down and make our jobs less secure. So we must fight *with* sweatshop workers overseas and here for better conditions and for the freedom to move. And we must fight *with* illegal workers in Australia. This is the only way to improve *all* of our conditions and job security.

We live in a time where nation-states are trying to criminalize refugees, workers and activists. Governments present people of colour, protestors and terrorists as one and the same thing: an enemy within. In response to this we must not buy into the lies of nationalism and white supremacy. This can only backfire. Instead we must state the uncomfortable truth more loudly than ever. And we must dismantle nations, borders and racism. In their place we need to build global solidarity and alternative political communities.

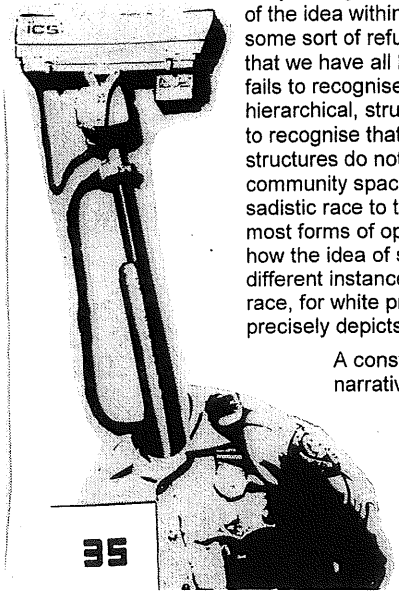
We don't want a world with *nice* wars, and *nice* borders, and a nice government...
We want a world with no war, no borders and no government!

But I thought we left our privilege at the door…

White privilege is not often identified as a major issue within anarchist communities. When it is, it is mostly dealt with quite superficially and as if it is not a particularly bad form of racism, not as bad as a racist insult to someone's face. It is *the* dominant form of racism and it is completely structural, in much the same way as whiteness is constructed as normative in the rest of society. It is why non-white people are not often part of this community, because we allow practices that are comfortable for white people to go unchallenged as if they are either comfortable for everyone, or if their not, then it's okay anyway because we have our struggle and they (the non-white 'other') have theirs. This structural hegemony of whiteness must be deconstructed not just so there can suddenly be all these coloured people involved in anarchist communities – they won't just suddenly sign up – but so that we can actually have a community that is anti-racist in a meaningful and structural way. As Nguyen has written, "while race *everywhere else but punk* is understood as institutional, structural, within the scene it gets talked about in terms of often isolated, individual attitudes" (1999: web site). So while anarchists have been able to produce stunning critiques of multiculturalism and how it reproduces racist modes of thought this has not extended to a critique of race within anarchist communities.

The general claim to anti-racism of anarchist communities enables the structural problem of white privilege to be obscured. After all why would someone want to be part of a progressive community if they were racist? This ignores the real issue of how racial privilege manifests. It also ignores the fact that it is much easier for a white person to be superficially anti-racist then for a coloured person to superficially leave behind their racial 'baggage'. As a friend, Nelson, suggested to me, the assumption goes that upon taking up 'membership' of this community a white person is considered to be anti-racist. It seems that the need to unify through some overarching sense of identification is a result of the idea within anarchist communities that everyone is seeking some sort of refuge from the mainstream capitalist hegemony and that we have all been damaged by it in some way. This completely fails to recognise the existence of a multitude of different types of hierarchical, structural oppressions that we live under. It also fails to recognise that, despite being 'radical communities', those structures do not suddenly disappear as soon as we enter a community space. What I'm not attempting to do is to create some sadistic race to the bottom, where the person who can pile up the most forms of oppression wins. However, it is necessary to show how the idea of solidarity through 'shared victimisation' allows different instances of power to go unrecognised and, in terms of race, for white privilege to go unchallenged. Bell Hooks most precisely depicts the result of this idea:

> A construction of political solidarity that is rooted in a narrative of shared victimisation not only acts to re-center



Mimi Nguyen article
'It's Not a White World: looking for race in punk'
www.worsethanqueer.com/slander/pprace.html

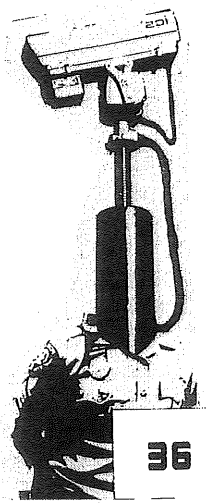
> whites, it risks obscuring the particular ways racist domination impacts on the lives on marginalised groups. Implicit in the assumption that even those who are privileged via racist hierarchy suffer, is the notion that it is only when those in power get in touch with how they too are victimised will they rebel against structures of domination (1995: 153).

As Hooks tells it, the idea of 'shared victimisation' has the effect of incorporating all forms of oppression back into normative modes of thought where questions of how power is enacted don't actually get interrogated. This is especially relevant in anarchist communities where the idea that even white people suffer under hierarchies of racial privilege is perpetuated (as are other forms, such as that men suffer under patriarchy). Simply it means that only when someone feels personally oppressed by a certain structural hierarchy will they act to change it, which if it is the case renders any form of anarchist activism obsolete as it reduces the possibility of meaningful solidarity.

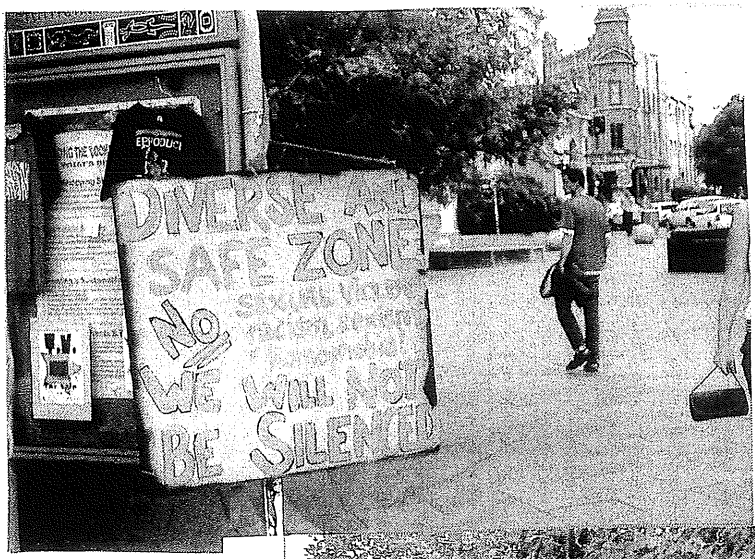
In terms of anarchist communities then, just speaking the rhetoric of being an open non-hierarchical community does not subvert the problems of power and domination that are implicated in race. Ultimately, in terms of race – as the experience of multiculturalism in Australia has shown us – power is held onto and enacted as a system of domination by the white majority in the form of deciding who gets access and when to this community. Yes, non-white people in this community can have a voice. As I've argued a significant positive element of these anarchist communities is the ability for people who are not in the dominant group regarding race, gender, sexuality, etc to express their criticisms. However, this does not hide the fact that to be involved in this community to such an extent, I would already have had to assimilate to some degree to a set of expectations that are informed by normative whiteness. As Hooks says, "When black people enter social contexts that remain unchanged, unaltered, in no way stripped of the framework of white supremacy, we are pressured to assimilate. We are rewarded for assimilation" (1995: 187). And it is often more comfortable than the alternative. It is that comfort that often means privilege within our community is not confronted and this is not a satisfactory outcome. Another friend of mine, Noha, who has long been involved in the anarchist and punk communities, told me via email that:

> When you're a woman, or a person of colour, and I think in the case of the punk scene in Sydney if you were queer as well ... you always have to go somewhere else to access other parts of your identity, of your personality... There are a lot of people in the punk scene who don't have that experience, and they're the white men. They don't need to go anywhere else. They have the choice of making punk their life. (personal correspondence)

The idea that only certain people feel entirely comfortable in these communities, is a question of how power is situated and what issues get taken up. It should not just be left to non-white people to have to raise and resolve problems of racial power.

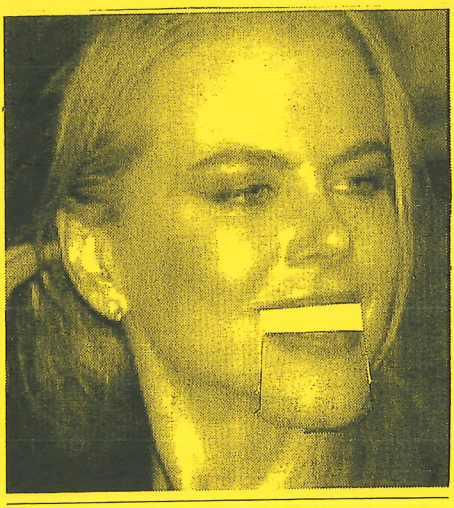


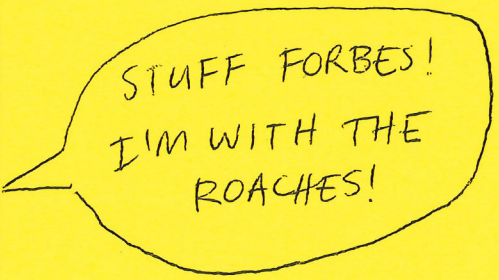
Sunil Menon



Creative workshops for Forbes protest
26th -30th August
STUCCO, 197 Wilson St, Newtown
(close to Macdonaldtown Station & Nth King St)

STUCCO, student housing co-op have kindly made available their large common room.
Working by day and night, painting up banners, sewing up flags, printing T-shirts, making cardboard puppets and lots of stuff to make the protest colourful.
Call: Graham 0407 951 688 or Kris 0431 370 148.





IT'S THE ULTRA FUN PACKED ACTIVITY PAGE!

STREET SCENE

ALLEYS
BINS
BOTTLES
CARS
CHAINS
CHILDREN
CRATES
CURBS
DERELICTS
DOORS
DRAINS
DUMPSTERS
FENCES
FILTH
GARBAGE
GLASS
GRATES
HEAPS
HYDRANTS
JUNK
METERS
NEWSPAPERS
PIPES
POLICE
POTHOLES
PUDDLES
SEWERS
STEPS
STOOPS
TIRES
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Today's empire's
tomorrow's ashes